

Tuesday

STAYING SOBER – FACING TRAUMA

We are exposed daily to traumatic events around the world. Whether it's the devastation of a community through war or natural disaster, or something inflicted on one person by another, these are distressing experiences which cause long lasting trauma and pain. The news may also trigger memories in our own hearts of past experiences and events. Is there relief from this deep grief and pain?

What has been done cannot be undone. However, God can help us navigate today by giving us peace in our souls and healing in our bodies. Our first action is to turn our hearts and thoughts towards God and allow His love to encourage us as we listen to what He has to say through the scriptures as recorded in the Bible.

Whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm. So do not be afraid. I am with you. Do not be terrified. I am your God. I will make you strong and help you. I will hold you safe in my hands. I always do what is right. (Proverbs 1:33 NIV, Isaiah 41:10 NIRV)

While healing of the mind and soul is a process that takes time, we don't need to hide from the past and shove painful memories into the deep dark places in our soul. In God's presence, and often with the assistance of knowledgeable helpers, we can find help to live well today. We can be set free from the traumas of our past. Jesus died on the cross for all sin and was resurrected from the dead proving the power of God over all evil – and that includes the evil traumas inflicted on us. Today is a new opportunity to reach out and receive this amazing God who will provide healing from all suffering.

Prayer: Loving God, it is most difficult to face the pain buried deep in my soul. Help me to come to believe that You are the Power who can restore me from the trauma I have experienced. Come and be with me in those dark and fearful memories. Today, help me to hear Your voice speaking peace to those places where I hurt. Thank you for caring for me. Amen

Wednesday

WISDOM FOR THE RECOVERY JOURNEY: DON'T TRADE ADDICTIONS

The wisest man of his time King Solomon compiled sayings that can be found in the book of Proverbs in the Bible. Some of these address addiction issues. We often think that addictions are limited to drugs and alcohol, but we are coming to know there are many other substances and practices which we use to cover our feelings of pain. Food and money are two other common problem areas.

Listen to me, my children! Be wise and have enough sense to follow the right path. Don't be a heavy drinker or stuff yourself with food. It will make you feel drowsy, and you will end up poor with only rags to wear. Give up trying so hard to get rich. Your money flies away before you know it, just like an eagle suddenly taking off. (Proverbs 23:19-21 CEV)

Trading socially unacceptable addictions for ones which are socially acceptable doesn't solve our real problem. Whenever we seek to sort out or avoid our feelings with anything other than the comfort and healing of God, we only create a path for continued suffering. God knows what we need in every area of our life, and He promises to take care of us if we will come to Him first and let Him work out His will in each situation.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Jesus said: Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 13:6, Matthew 11:28 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, There are so many things in life that I don't understand and don't know how to sort out on my own. Help me to do the work of recovery that exposes what needs deeper healing. Give me the strength not to run but rather to reach out to you for the comfort and healing I need. Amen

Thursday

WHERE IN THE WORLD DO I BELONG?

How many of us feel like we truly belong? Much addictive and destructive behaviour is rooted in loneliness. Mother Teresa said, "Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat. We must find each other."

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT)

Feeling lonely is not restricted to the poor or the rich, the educated or the uneducated. God created us in His image so we could know love in relationship with Him, and with those around us. A broken relationship with God results in broken relationships with others around us and loneliness results.

God loves us with an everlasting love. He loved us so much that He sent His son Jesus into the world to die on the cross so that the wages of sin could be paid for, and our relationship with Him restored. We do not have to continue to live lonely. When we accept Jesus as our Lord we are adopted into God's family, and we become children of God. When we know we are loved and accepted, our hearts are touched, and we begin to experience peace and the security of belonging.

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. (Psalm 143:8 NIV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for sending Jesus into the world so that my sins could be forgiven and my relationship with You restored. In good times and in times of trouble, help me remember that I belong to You and You will never leave me alone. I am truly blessed to be part of Your family. Amen

Friday

NO REGRETS

The second promise found in the Big Book of AA tells us that if we diligently work the steps, *"We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it."* This echoes what we read in the Bible about our journey in this new life with God in recovery.

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. (Philippians 3:12-14 MSG)

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves is accepting the fact that whatever has taken place in our past is done and cannot be changed. We can learn from it, and we can allow God to use it to bring about good, but we cannot change it. In fact, we can safely let go of the regret that we may continue to feel.

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28 NIV)

Because of God's unfailing love for us, we can look at our past with eyes wide open. We can process what went on in some events and, where necessary take responsibility, and then just let the rest go. Above all, we can live in gratitude to God for one more day to enjoy His blessings and to carry this message to others who suffer.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for opening up my future and closing my past. With Your help I will embrace everything this day brings trusting that you will guide me along a good path and use everything in my life, both the good and the bad, to bring about Your plan for my future. Amen

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Weekend

VALENTINE'S DAY – HEARING GOD SAY, "I LOVE YOU"

Three of the most comforting, encouraging, and life-giving words in the English language are, "I love you". Spoken from a sincere heart, these three little words carry a tenderness and strength that will fill a lonely heart and bring a smile to a sad face. These are words that come from the hearts of loving parents when they see their new baby. They are whispered in the ear of someone frail as they lie on a hospital bed. They are words spoken with chocolates to a special someone, or perhaps with a "knowing gaze" shared across a room. They are words that every human longs to hear over and over again.

As we go forward in recovery God wants us to hear Him tenderly tell us, "I love you." These words bring healing and peace to our body, mind, and spirit as we absorb the truth of what is being said. We will find, as we read God's Word in the Bible, that it repeatedly tells us of God's unfailing love for us. As we pray with a quiet heart we will hear God's voice echoing in our ears, "I love you".

I pray that your love will have deep roots. I pray that it will have a strong foundation. May you have power together with all the Lord's holy people to understand Christ's love. May you know how wide and long and high and deep it is. And may you know his love, even though it can't be known completely. Then you will be filled with everything God has for you. (Ephesians 3:17-19 NIRV)

We cannot begin to find words to describe the all-encompassing and tender love that God continues to pour out on us. This Valentine's Day, let's remind ourselves that love is available to us. God is with us. Let's live in God's love today, and every day.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your gracious love for me that is wide enough to embrace me wherever I go. Come and heal me in the place of my deepest wounding and disappointment. Accompany me in my brightest moments. Fill me with courage and comfort when I feel challenged. This I know for sure, You truly do love me! Amen

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 7

Monday

TOGETHER WE CAN

Life in addiction is life in isolation. We figure things out on our own. We seek to get what we want when we want it, regardless of the impact on others. In recovery God invites us to a new way of living which includes sharing our thoughts, our needs, our desires, and our daily lives with God and others.

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 NLT)

It's important to learn from others who have walked the recovery path before us. Since we become like the company we keep, it is important to have friends we respect and who are modeling the qualities of honesty, perseverance, and accountability. These friends, who have chosen to walk in the ways of God will challenge us to get the help we need as we move forward. When we are made aware of our shortcomings, we will need these friends for support as we adjust our attitude and behaviour towards others. They will encourage us to become a person who shares and cares about others.

Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. The way of foolish people seems right to them. But those who are wise listen to advice. (Galatians 6:2, NLT, Proverbs 12:15 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to embrace Your plan for my life. Help me to be accountable to Your Word and listen to the guidance and counsel of reliable friends. Help me to love others and care for them as You love and care for me. Amen